

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-16

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DACCA

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 151449

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E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: MASS, PFOR, BG

SUBJECT: BENGALIEE INTEREST IN MUNITIONS PURCHASE

REF: DACCA 3051

1. DEPT REMAINS UNCONVINCE OF NEED OR DESIRABILITY OF
ESTABLISHING MILITARY SUPPLY POLICY FOR BANGLADESH. IN
TWO EXTANT CASES (PRESENT ONE AND PREVIOUS CIRCUITOUS
QUERY RE SPARES FOR F-86'S), ISSUE HAS BEEN RAISED IN
MANNER WHICH GIVES NO CLUE AS TO LEVEL OF INTEREST WITHIN
BDG. ESTABLISHMENT OF MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH
USG, HOWEVER, IS POLITICAL ISSUE WHATEVER THE SIGNIFICANCE
OF IMMEDIATE REQUEST. UNTIL AND UNLESS QUESTION IS PUT
TO US IN MORE SERIOUS AND INSISTENT FORM, WE WOULD PREFER
NOT TO ADDRESS PROBLEM.

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2. OF SUGGESTED ALTERNATIVES IN REFTTEL, "SILENT TREATMENT"

SEEMS MOST APPROPRIATE COURSE OF ACTION. IF, AS YOU SUGGEST, BENGALIEES CHOOSE TO DRAW THE CONCLUSION THAT WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN AMILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP, SO MUCH THE BETTER. OTHER, MORE APPROPRIATE NON-COMMUNIST SOURCES OF SUPPLY ARE AVAILABLE, INCLUDING MOST NOTABLY THE INDIANS AND THE BRITISH. POTENTIAL BUSINESS IS MINISCULE, AND FAILURE TO RESPOND WILL UNDERLINE OUR VIEW THAT BENGALIEE RESOURCES OUGHT NOT TO BE DIVERTED FROM

URGENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS. WE SEE NO SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL BENEFIT TO ACCRUE FROM THIS, NOR MUCH POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO OUR RELATIONSHIP UNLESS BDG RAISES MATTER TO POLITICAL LEVEL.

3. WE WILL CONSIDER THE QUESTION AS REMAINING OPEN, AND ARE PREPARED TO CONSIDER POLICY QUESTION ON FORMAL BASIS SHOULD BDG CHOOSE TO PURSUE MATTER FURTHER. KISSINGER

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